

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

1. From the beginning of March through the first week of June 1954, there was no evidence that work had been resumed in the pure calcium plant at Elektrochemisches Kombinat Bitterfeld. No Russian orders are known to have been given to the Bitterfeld plant during this time.
2. Unidentified Russians visited the administration buildings of the plant on one or two occasions during this period: their business is not known. In late May, however, Dipl. Chem. Dombois, ¹ (fmu) (formerly in an unspecified sodium section, now on chlorates) informed a colleague that Fyodorov had been in the plant again. Fyodorov was the last Russian director-general at the time when the plant was an SAC concern. Dombois spoke as if Fyodorov had been in the plant within the previous month. Dombois did not say what Fyodorov had been doing or where he was now stationed and there was no chance to ask him. Dombois said he had spoken to Fyodorov, who had enquired how at least one German chemist whom he remembered was getting on. When Dombois was on sodium work, he had had quite a lot of contact with Fyodorov.
3. Meeting on 1955 Research and Development
On 24 May 1954, there was a meeting of the directors and the leading research and other workers, about 30 in all, to discuss 1955 research and development work. At this meeting, the following points, among others, were mentioned:

- (a) Work must be conducted to develop or procure apparatus for testing Bitterfeld's iron powder. Although at the moment (May 1954) the plant could produce 10 tons per month, only about 3 tons per month were marketable. The USSR was buying its iron powder in the West and Poland was also procuring part of her needs from the West. One reason for Bitterfeld's difficulty in disposing of its product was the inability of the plant to analyze its product properly and, consequently, to inform potential customers of the exact physical properties and other data of the iron powder. This situation must be corrected in 1955.

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- (b) Special attention must be given to magnesium metal production, although there was uncertainty as to how even magnesium chloride was to be produced in sufficient quantities. Magnesium metal was a particularly critical item in East Germany.
- (c) Special efforts were also to be made in the field of titanium production.

4. Exchange of Scientific and Technical Experience (Erfahrungsaustausch)

- (a) It was also mentioned at the meeting described above that China had submitted a request to East Germany for an exchange of experience (Erfahrungsaustausch) in the field of iron powder work. Somebody remarked that the Chinese wanted to come to Bitterfeld for information.
- (b) That this Erfahrungsaustausch is felt in East Germany to be rather one-sided, is further illustrated by the remarks of Minister Fritz Selbmann. Dr. Guenther Wehner of Bitterfeld stated recently that he had been at an unspecified meeting in Dresden and that Selbmann had then said in so many words that East Germany was not keen that Erfahrungsaustausch should go on: it was so one-sided.

5. Magnesium

The seriousness of the magnesium situation was underlined by the recent delivery of the total State Reserve of magnesium to Bitterfeld, where it is to be kept in the future. Rudolf Hegenbarth, of the Main Administration for the Heavy Chemical Industry, stated, in Bitterfeld, that the delivery represented the entire State Reserve. The delivery amounted to two tons.

6. Zirconium

- (a) Zirconium production in East Germany is confined to Bitterfeld, which is, however, at the moment unable to supply the entire needs of the VEB Werk fuer Fernmeldewesen, Berlin-Oberschoeneweide. This latter plant had recently had an exceptional need for extra zirconium for some large transmitter tubes. There is doubt as to whether these tubes can now be finished on time, because of the lack of zirconium. Normal delivery from Bitterfeld to Werk fuer Fernmeldewesen is 30 kgs per month of zirconium oxide.
- (b) The Poles have turned down a request from Bitterfeld for an exchange of experience (Erfahrungsaustausch) involving a visit by Bitterfeld Germans to Poland to look at zirconium work there.
- (c) The East German trade organization (DHZ) recently imported 9 tons of zirconium (in unspecified raw material form), but it was of such poor quality that it could not be used at all.

7. Dr. Lehmann

The repatriated specialist Dr. Erich Lehmann, formerly in the USSR, left the plant in May for the West.

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